

MAIN STREET EMERGENCY GRANT PROGRAM

Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) introduced the Main Street Emergency Grant Program (MSEGP) to rescue small and mid-size businesses and nonprofits as they weather the coronavirus storm.

What it does:

- The Main Street Emergency Grant Program would allow small businesses and nonprofits to rapidly apply for grants through the Treasury Department to cover fixed costs, including payroll, during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Grant amounts would be based on a percentage of expenses necessary for the survival of the business.
- Businesses could spend the money on payroll or other fixed costs, such as rent, that are necessary to keep the business operating.
- These grants would turn into loans that would have to be repaid if businesses failed to restore their payroll to 80% of prior levels within 12 months of the termination of the COVID-19 public health emergency, unless the business can demonstrate a hardship that prevented them from doing so.
- The Main Street Emergency Grant Program also offers forgivable loans to mid-size businesses who are experiencing similar losses. These loans would be forgivable if businesses restore their payrolls to 80% within 12 months of the termination of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

How this differs from the Republican proposal:

- Republican proposal: loans capped at a maximum of \$10 million per applicant, authorized and administered by the Small Business Administration
- MSGEP: grants, not loans, administered by the Treasury Department for small businesses and nonprofits, and forgivable loans for mid-size businesses.
- Republican proposal: \$300 billion fund.
- MSGEP: double the Republican proposal, \$600 billion in direct appropriations, and additional money to make sure this gets up and running quickly.
- Republican proposal: applies to businesses with up to 500 employees.
- MSGEP: grants are targeted to smaller businesses based on the SBA's definition —mom and pop shops that need help now, but also provides assistance to mid-size businesses who are being left out of the conversation.

